MATTERS RAISED WITH PERMISSION

Reported Statements of U.S. Ambassador

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU (West Bengal): Mr. Chairman, Sir, through you, I want to draw the attention of the House to a very, very shameful development that has taken place in this country.

(MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN in the Chair)

We are finding suddenly that the Ambassador of a country is behaving in the vice-regal fashion, I am referring to the statements made by the U.S. Ambassador, Mr. David Mulford. We are aware that we are engaged in this country in a national debate on the kind of stand that the country should take on our vote on the nuclear issue regarding Iran at the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Sir, Mr. Mulford gave a statement to the Press, which was published all over, saying that the compliance and the facilitation of the implementation of the Peaceful Nuclear Energy Cooperation Agreement that the Prime Minister had entered into with President Bush would be dependent on whether India would vote against Iran at the International Atomic Energy Agency. Sir, the second part of the same interview which was given to the Press Trust of India came out subsequently wherein Mr. Mulford had lambasted the Left parties for their stand on FDI in retail and some other policies on which we did not see eye-to-eye... *(Interruptions)*

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Basu, this is regarding the letter written by... *(Interruptions)*

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Sir, I am coming to that. *(Interruptions)* This is a very important issue and we think.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: No, no. I am only pointing out ...*(Interruptions)* Please sit down. *(Interruptions)*... I was just reminding you that you wanted to raise an issue relating to some letter written to the Chief Minister of West Bengal. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Sir, please bear with me. I appreciate you concern about time. But, I have also been around in this House for quite some time and know how to raise this kind of an issue.

Then, we would have no objection had Mr. David Mulford joined one of our Indian political parties and attacked the Left Parties, as is the won't of some many other parties during this period. But, sir, what is more shameful is this blatant violation of the Geneva Convention in terms of diplomatic behaviour was not taken by the Government of India seriously. They were pussyfooting with this. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SURENDRA LATH (Orissa): And you are supporting the Government.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: As a result of that, what has now happened is all the more reprehensible. On the 8th of January, there was a political meeting called by the CPI (M) at the Brigade Parade Ground of Kolkata. You know, Sir, the Chief Minister of West Bengal is one of the topmost leaders of the CPI (M), and in the course of his speech, he made and observation, I think, it was in keeping with the spirit of a unanimous resolution passed by this august House and the other august House that the occupation forces which are there in Iraq should withdraw from Iraq immediately. He said, "What is happening in Iraq is a blot on human history and human civilisation. Thousands of civilians have been killed, and President Bush is leading the most ...*(Interruptions)*... in the world today." ...*(Interruptions)*... I think he was well within his constitutional right of freedom of expression in making that observation. And, Mr. Mulford was now written a letter to the Chief Minister of West Bengal threatening him that if he goes on making such statements, American investments will not come into the State. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE (West Bengal): Send him back.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: And still, we are not aware of the stand of the Government on this issue. Sir, this country has earned her freedom through the sacrifice of millions of our freedom fighters. People had gone to gallows to earn the political freedom of this country. Is it possible that an elected Chief Minister of a country will be threatened by the Ambassador of another country? If he had some objection, he could have written to the foreign office of the Indian Government, through his own foreign office, and on the basis of that our foreign office could have communicated to the Chief Minister. Now, is it the self-respect of the country which is being emboldened by pussyfooting with this kind of an Ambassador? Sir, I don't know whether it is in the interest ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY (West Bengal): Recall him. ...*(Interruptions)*... Recall him.

SHRI N. JOTHI (Tamil Nadu): Recall him. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Speak one-by-one.

श्री कृपाल परमार (हिमाचल प्रदेश): उपसभापति महोदय, ...(व्यवधान)..

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*... वह बोल रहे हैं, आप बैठ जाइये। ...(व्यवधान)... Please sit down.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU Sir, therefore, what I would like to know from the senior members of the Government who are sitting in this House is this. Is it in enlightened national interest that we are pussyfooting with this Ambassador and we are not taking up this issue with the kind of seriousness that it warrants? Sir, we don't know. Sir, we think this is not a question of a left party or a right party or a centrist party. It is a question of self-respect of the nation.

श्री सुरेन्द्र लाठः आप तो सरकार को समर्थन दे रहे हैं। ...(व्यवधान)...

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Sir, the question is, whether this House will succeed or fail in its historic responsibility of protecting the national interest and national self-respect of the country.

Sir, we are, therefore, demanding that no short of recall of this man, who has trampled all the ...*(Interruptions)*... Conventions will satisfy us. He should be recalled. We want a specific assurance from the Government on this question. Sir, we will not be satisfied with anything short of recall of that man. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, I think this is a very serious issue. Actually, we wanted to raise this issue on Friday itself when the hon. Prime Minister was present in the House. Sir, we want the response of the Government on this issue. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: You all associate yourselves. ...*(Interruptions)*... Yes, yes, all of you associate yourselves.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Sir this is the sense of the House. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: It is known. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Sir, the sense of the House is that this Ambassador should be sent back. ...*(Interruptions)*... This is the demand of the House. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Government will ...*(Interruptions)*... Please sit down. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: It is a serious issue. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir, you have understood the sense of the Hosue. ...*(Interruptions)*... The House should recommend to the Government to demand the immediate recall ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: There is no Motion before me. ...*(Interruptions)*... It is only a Zero Hour submission. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: It is an unprecedented situation. ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, I said, it is an unprecedented situation.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Leader of the Opposition wants to say something ...*(Interruptions)*... This is only a Zero Hour submission. ...*(Interruptions)*... Please sit down ...*(Interruptions)*... I am on my legs.

SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: This is the sense of the House. ...*(Interruptions)*... The Government should respond to it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Mr. Dipankar Mukherjee, please sit down. One minute please. ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: Sir, I am fully aware that under normal circumstances such a recommendation cannot go from the House. But this is an unprecedented situation. It involves the entire self-respect of our country. ...*(Interruptions)*... We cannot barter our country. ...*(Interruptions)*... India is not a banana republic. Please remember, India is not a banana republic. We are as hard as a nut to crack as coconut. The USA must understand this and they will have to recall this Ambassador from the country. ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Leader of the Opposition wants to say something. ...*(Interruptions)*... Mr. Dipankar Mukherjee, please sit down.

THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): Mr. Deputy Chairman, Sir, this statement to which a reference is being made

here, when this was made I was not in the country, but I did come to read of it. This is really a gross impropriety and it is totally a violation, without any doubt a violation of all existing diplomatic norms, to which all of us subscribe when we exchange Ambassadors or High commissioners. I would have expected, Sir, that given the manner in which this has been done and thereafter compounding it by making observations about a Chief Minister of the Federation of India, he might be a Chief Minister of one or another political persuasion, but nevertheless he is an honoured Chief Minister of one of the States of the country. It is quite wrong that an hon. reprsentative of today's great power should find it necessary to make the kind of observations that have been made. We understand, Sir, that there a hegemony of power, but there has to be a simultaneous understanding that the hegemony of power is not necessarily ans hegemoney of wisdom. What we have witnessed is clearly a demonstration of either a statement that has been made on the spur of the moment or a statement that has been made without due reflection and thought ...*(Interruptions)*... if it is a statement that this is being made by the representative ...*(Interruptions)*... I understand it. ...*(Interruptions)*... I am not going into the detail of it, whether a statement or a letter and a letter, then it seems it is a deliberate act, what is being said is deliberate ...*(Interruptions)*... Sir, further I personally feel that the sentiment of the House is patent, what I think it is mandatory, and it is mandatory for the Government to come clear and inform the House, to share with the House that they have either taken note of it or not taken note of it. And if they have not taken note of it, then, surely, they need to explain to the House, why not. And if they have taken note and have asked the country concerned to explain or to account for what statements have been made, it is necessary that this be done. I have recollections, Sir, that some years back, the then representative of this great country had made a statement just before elections had been called and the Government than — it was late Narasimha Rao Government — publicly made a clear statement unequivocally criticising this kind of interference in the functioning of the country. It is not necessary that everything that we do in India must be agreed to by all other countries in the world.

श्रीमती वृंदा कारत (पश्चिमी बंगाल): सर, उनकी हिम्मत कैसे हुई ऐसी चिट्ठी लिखने की?

SHRI JASWANT SINGH: But, it is necessary, Sir, that the Government to make its position clear, explain what it wants to do. Unless this is done, the sense of the House is not fully answered by the Government of India. That is what I want to say. Thank you.

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Sir, the Government will have to, specifically, say whether they are going to recall the Ambassador.

श्री शाहिद सिद्दिकी (उत्तर प्रदेश): हमें भी एक बात कहनी है। ...(व्यवधान)...

شری شاہد صدیقی : ہمیں بھی ایک بات کہنی ہے.....مداخلت.....

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: One minute. One minute ...*(Interruptions)*... Sentiments of the House have been expressed by Shri Nilotpal Basu very clearly ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI N. K. PREMACHANDRAN (Kerala): Sir, I also associate myself with the issued raised by my colleague and would like to say ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: When all of you are associating yourselves with it, then, what is the point in repeating? ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI N. JOTHI: Sir, I have only one sentence to say ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Let us hear the Government first ...*(Interruptions)*...

SHRI N. JOTHI: I have only one sentence to say ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: One-by-one ...*(Interruptions)*... Please sit down ...*(Interruptions)*... शरद यादव जी .. शरद यादव जी, बोलिए। ...(व्यवधान)... मैं बुलाऊंगा आपको ...(व्यवधान)... सिद्दिकी साहब, मैं आपको बुलाऊंगा। ...(व्यवधान)... प्लीज़ बैठिए .. .. वृंदा जी, आप बैठिए। ...(व्यवधान)...

श्रीमती वृंदा कारत: सर, सरकार चुप क्यों है? वह जवाब क्यों नहीं दे रही है? ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री उपसभापति: नीलोत्पल जी ने कहा है। ...(व्यवधान)... I have identified Shri Sharad Yadavji. ...(व्यवधान)... आप बैठिए .. वे बोल रहे हैं। ...(व्यवधान)... आप बैठिए।

श्री शरद यादव (बिहार): उपसभापति जी, दोनों माननीय सदस्यों ने जो बात कही है, मैं उसमें ज्यादा कुछ नहीं जोड़ना चाहता, लेकिन यह जो मामला है, यह इतना गंभीर है, इतना अपमान करने वाला है, सरकार इतने दिन से बैठी रही। निश्चित तौर पर जो American Ambassador यहां

†[ ]Transliteration in Urdu Script.

हैं, लगातार उनके बयान जिस तरह से आ रहे हैं, आज उन्होंने बुद्ध देव जी को पत्र लिखा है, कुल बहुत से लोग हैं, हम लोग हैं, जो ईरान के मामले में, ईराक के मामले में, दुनिया की और बातों के मामलों में बहुत से सवालों पर अमरीका के साथ या दुनिया के दूसरे देशों के साथ असहमत हैं। इसका मतलब यह नहीं है कि यहां का जो American Ambassador है, वह ठीक कहा विरोधी दल के नेता ने कि वह इस तरह से मर्यादाओं को लांघे और सरकार बैठी रहे, इस तरह का काम चलेगा, निश्चित तोर पर यह देश के स्वाभिमान का मामला है। तत्काल सरकार को इस पर ऐसी कार्यवाही करनी चाहिए कि दुनिया भर में हम लोग ...(व्यवधान)... सौ करोड़ लोग हैं, इस तरह का अपमानित होने का मामला ...(व्यवधान)...

श्री उपसभापति: देखिए, एक-एक पार्टी से एक-एक सदस्य बोलेगा। ...(व्यवधान)... प्लीज..

SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Sir, this is a very sensitive issue. All parties have to be given a chance to put forth their viewpoints ...*(Interruptions)*... The issue came up because the Government is not responding ...*(Interruptions)*...

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: How do you know that? Let the Government react ...*(Interruptions)*... Why are you saying that? ...*(Interruptions)*... The Government wants to react ...*(Interruptions)*... Let us hear the Government first ...*(Interruptions)*... देखिए] You want a reply from the Government and the Government wants to react.

SHRI N. JOTHI: It is a very, very late reaction ...*(Interruptions)*...

कार्मिक लोक शिकायत और पेंशन मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री तथा संसदीय कार्य मंत्रालय में राज्य मंत्री (श्री सुरेश पचौरी): उपसभापति महोदय, इस सदन के सम्मानित सदस्य नीलोत्पल बसु जी ने, विपक्ष के नेता आदरणीय जसवन्त सिंह जी ने और बाकी अन्य सदस्यों ने अभी जो मिस्टर डेविड मलफोर्ड के पत्र के संबंध में बातें उठाई हैं, वे निश्चित रूप से बहुत गंभीर हैं। मान्यवर, पश्चिम बंगाल के मुख्य मंत्री जी ने US Ambassador के पत्र के संबंध में प्रधान मंत्री जी को अवगत कराया है और मैं यह बताना चाहूंगा कि सरकार ने इसे बहुत गंभीरता से लिया है। Ministry of External Affairs ने US Ambassador को बुलाकर इस संबंध में अपना मंतव्य जाहिर किया है और यह भी कहा है जैसा कि आदरणीय जसवन्त सिंह जी और नीलोत्पल बसु जी ने कहा, कि किसी भी Ambassador के लिए यह सर्वथा अनुचित है कि वह डायरेक्टली किसी भी राज्य के मुख्य मंत्री को पत्र लिखे और निस्संदेह जो established diplomatic procedure है, यह उसका उल्लंघन है, मुझे यह कहने में कोई संकोच नहीं है।

सामान्य तौर पर कोई भी Ambassador MEA के ज़रिए ही communicate करता है, इसलिए ये जो बातें उठाई गई हैं और इन बातों से सभी सम्मानित सदस्यों ने अपने आपको सम्बद्ध किया है, तो मैं इस सदन की भावना से माननीय प्रधान मंत्री जी को अवगत करा दूंगा।

SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: This Government has not given any assurance. ...*(interruptions)*... We cannot accept these proceedings. ...*(interruptions)*... We are walking out in protest ...*(interruptions)*...

SHRI SITARAM YECHURY: There should be a straightforward demand for a recall ...*(interruptions)*... If that is not accepted by the Government, we are going to walk out ...*(interruptions)*...

[At this stage some hon. Members left the Chember]

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Next subject. Shri S.S. Ahluwalia.

CONCERN REGARDING CLOSING/SLOWING DOWN OF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN HAZARIBAG AND ARREST OF SHRI YASHWANT SINHA

श्री एस॰ एस॰ अहलुवालिया (झारखंड): उपसभापति महोदय, मैं आपके माध्यम से सदन का आकर्षित करना चाहता हूं कि हमारे माननीय सदस्य और भूतपूर्व वित्त मंत्री यशवंत सिन्हा जी, जो हजारीबाग से लोक सभा के सांसद भी रहे और अब झारखंड से राज्य सभा के सांसद हैं, पिछली 9 फरवरी को उन्होंने एक पत्रकार सम्मेलन के माध्यम से केन्द्रीय सरकार को अवगत कराया कि एन॰डी॰ए॰ की सरकार में जो योजनाएं झारखंड राज्य सभा में चल रही थीं, दुर्भाग्य से यू॰पी॰ए॰ की सरकार के आने के बाद बहुत सारी योजनाएं बंद कर दी गईं और बहुत सी योजनाएं धीमी कर गईं। उसमें उल्लेखनीय योजनाएं जो थीं, एक तरफ तो हम कहते हैं कि ट्राइबल इलाके और आतंकवाद प्रभावित क्षेत्रों में नए से नए उद्यम लगाए जाएं, नए से नए विकास किए जाएं, ताकि वहां के लोग विकास की मुख्य धारा से जुड़े, वहा सेंट्रल बोर्ड ऑफ डायरेक्टर्स और सेंट्रल बोर्ड ऑफ एक्साईज़ एंड कस्टम्स का क्षेत्रीय ट्रेनिंग सेटर था। तत्कालीन केंद्र सरकार ने हजारीबाग में ढाई करोड़ रुपए में उसके इनफास्ट्रक्चर को तैयार करने के लिए जमीन ली थी, वहां कंस्ट्रक्शन शुरू है और यह ट्रेनिंग सेंटर चल रहा था, पर यू॰पी॰ए॰ सरकार के आने के बाद ये दोनों ट्रेनिंग सेंटर्स बंद कर दिए गए। हजारीबाग को भारत की मुख्य धारा से जोड़ने के लिए जो रेल के कार्यक्रम चल रहे थे, उनको धीमा कर दिया गया। अन्य जो दूसरी योजनाएं थीं, उनको धीमा कर दिया गया। उनके आगे के पैसे के आवंटन को रोकना शुरू कर दिया गया, जिससे काम रुक गया, जिसकी और वे बार-बार केंद्र सरकार के मंत्रियों का ध्यान आकर्षित करते रहे और उनको पत्र लिखते रहे, पर दुर्भाग्य से वित्त मंत्री पी॰ चिदम्बरम जी के जो जवाब जाते रहे, वे सिर्फ दुर्भाग्यपूर्ण